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He will find, also, some pieces that ought to have been imperatively excluded from any selection, or collection, professing to be poetical. But perhaps it is impossible, in such a miscellaneous company, to keep out all improper persons ; — to make it, in fact, select as well as miscellaneous.

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10. — *An Address on the Uses of History, delivered before the Philomathean Society of the Washington County Seminary, at Salem, (Ia.) March 26th, 1840.* By LEONARD BLISS, JR. Louisville : Prentiss & Weissenger. 8vo. pp. 19.

MR. BLISS has done well to select history as the subject of his address. He remarks, with truth and justice, upon the want of historical knowledge in this country. The study of history should begin with the earliest stages of school education, and continue to the close of the college course. But unfortunately there is no institution in the land which attempts or even professes to carry out such a system. The American student is left to pick up his knowledge of history piecemeal, as he can ; at most he enjoys but a trifling amount of teaching, and that as a matter of secondary consequence. This is all wrong, and the thinking minds of the country ought to know it ; for the study of history is of vital importance to the welfare of a republic. Such discourses as that of Mr. Bliss are calculated to do good, especially in the West, where the institutions of education are yet forming, and are capable as yet of being moulded after any type. It is written in a free and flowing style, sometimes eloquent, and always animated with the right spirit. The rhetoric of some of the eloquent passages is not always to our taste ; they sound occasionally a little Carlylish ; but, “ for substance of doctrine,” the discourse is orthodox to the core.

The orator first points out the general uses of history ; and then shows its peculiar importance in the United States. His views are well illustrated by pertinent examples.

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## NOTE

TO ARTICLE III. OF NUMBER 107.

THE following communication from Mr. Allston reached us too late for insertion in the last Number.

“ *To the Editor of the North American Review.*

“ SIR. — In a very complimentary article, in the last Number of the ‘ North American Review,’ on my late exhibition, it was

with much regret that I observed an allusion to an old, but unfounded, report concerning my friend, Mr. Martin, imputing to him some unfair dealing in relation to myself. I had hoped that report, *which I have again and again contradicted*, had long since been set at rest. But since this, it seems, is not the case, I feel it to be a duty which I owe to an honorable man and distinguished artist, to state distinctly, *that Mr. Martin has never borrowed from me either thought or hint in a single instance*. He has too much genius to borrow from any one.

“As to the thought of lighting my picture of Belshazzar from the ‘writing on the wall,’ (which is the *imagined* ground of unfairness,) I never claimed it as *my* invention; for, as the reviewer has justly remarked, the originality consists in giving to the light a preternatural source; and this is well known to have originated with Correggio, as may be seen in his celebrated *Notte*; besides, it has so often been repeated, under various modifications, as long ago to have become a kind of common property in the art; and such indeed I considered it when, in 1816, I adopted it in another picture, — the Angel liberating St. Peter, — where the prison and the figures are both lighted by a supposed *emanation* from the Angel. But Mr. Martin’s fame does not depend on such subordinate accessories as this; in my opinion a more original mind than his was never impressed on canvass. In proof, however, of the slight value I ever attached to the accessory in question, it is many years since I have altogether dispensed with it; and this I did, not because Mr. Martin also had it, but because I found that it would very materially interfere with an important part of my composition; so that *my* Belshazzar is not now lighted from the ‘writing on the wall.’ In Martin’s picture, (which is well known here from the print,) the light so proceeding has an admirable effect, and is happily suited to *his* composition; yet do I consider it but *as a grain of sand* in the production of the powerful impression so universally felt from that extraordinary work; nor have I the least doubt, had he seen fit to light the picture from his gigantic candelabra, or from any other source, that still it would have retained its present poetical grandeur, and still have been worthy of imperial munificence.\*

“If I know myself, I am the last man to seek competition, which I hold to be unworthy a true artist, who should love his art for its own sake. The very word *rival* grates upon my nature. But in this instance competition is out of the question; for the difference between Mr. Martin’s work and mine

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\* It is said that Mr. Martin was honored by a *solid* compliment for this picture, from the Emperor of Russia.”

is not of degree, but of *kind* ; and things differing in kind (though admitting preference) cannot be compared. Many persons seem not to be aware of this, or that the same subject may be painted by twenty artists, and yet be treated differently by each, provided the artists have all *minds of their own*. Now between Mr. Martin's Belshazzar and mine, *there is not a single point of resemblance* ; nor could there well be, since each was conceived according to the character of our individual minds. Yet does not this characteristic difference preclude a deep sympathy between us. At least, I answer for myself, that he could not wish for more than I have often felt under the spell of his genius.

“ And here, (since I am now, however unwillingly, before the public,) I may as well say to those who might look for any thing like architectural display in my picture, that they will certainly be disappointed ; indeed the small space of background which my composition allows, would not admit of it ; but, were it even much larger, I should never dream of contending with Martin in architectural magnificence, in which *he stands alone*.

“ A word more. Since some allusion also has been made to my studies in England, I trust I may be pardoned if I avail myself of the present opportunity to say, that I owe much of whatever knowledge I may possess of my art to the English school ; my connexion with which, — and no less from respect than affection, — I shall ever hold in high value. As a body, the English artists are full of talent ; and, were it not that to those omitted it might seem invidious, it would give me pleasure to name many individuals among them who deservedly hold a high rank in the art.

“ Very respectfully,

“ Your obedient servant,

“ WASHINGTON ALLSTON.

“ *Cambridge Port, June, 1840.*”

## NOTE

TO ARTICLE III. OF NUMBER 108.

It is stated, (p. 65,) in relation to a speech of Lord Dorchester, as follows. “ Chief Justice Marshall pronounced it spurious, without stating the grounds of his judgment. In this opinion he is followed by Mr. Sparks.” On recurring to what Mr. Sparks says on the subject, we do not find that he expresses a decided opinion, but merely mentions that there were different sentiments in regard to the authenticity of the speech.